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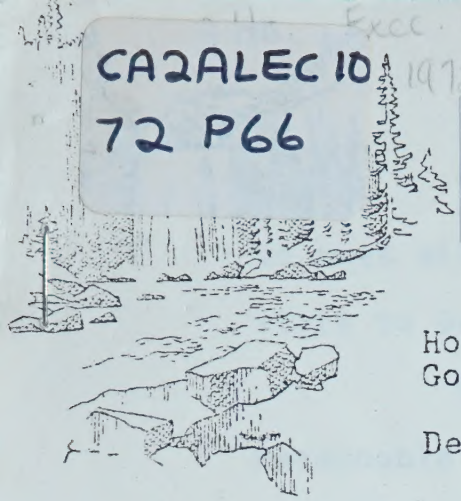

WILD KAKWA

P. O. Box 212
Grande Prairie, Alberta

Sept. 22/72

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Hon. Premier Peter Lougheed
Government of Alberta.

Dear Sir...

Please find enclosed copies of submissions made earlier this year to your government with respect to preservation and protection for the Kakwa Falls region.

At meetings with the Hon. Mr. Yurko and the Hon. Dr. Warrack in December of 1971, we were asked to provide evidence of regional support for these proposals. More than 10,000 persons supported the wilderness area proposal, while more than half that number have registered support for the restricted development area. These documents are in the hands of our MLA Dr. Winston Backus, the honorable minister of public works.

Response from the members of your government has left much to be desired. Industrial exploitation of the region continues, with no evidence of any possible protection.

It is our opinion that any more procrastination by your government will result in locking the barn after the horse is stolen.

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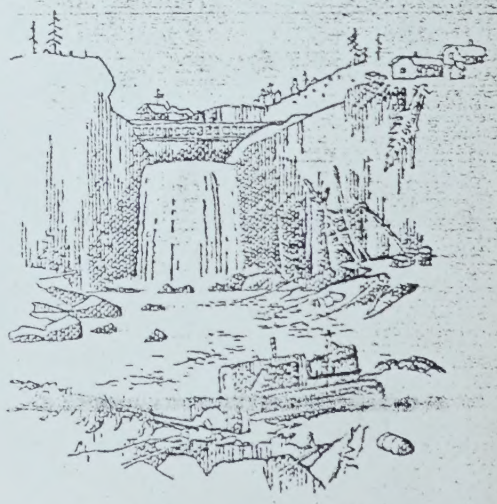

For Alberta's Future - A Society Dedicated to Saving Wilderness in the Peace

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The executive of Wild Kakwa requests an opportunity to meet with cabinet on this most important issue during your visit to Grande Prairie on Oct. 17.

We feel that we have done our part in providing a reasonable proposal for development in the Kakwa Falls region and gaining proof of wholesale support for the proposal from throughout northern Alberta.

The Peace country has NO wilderness areas subject to protection under the wilderness areas act. Further, the Kakwa region is the only mountainous wilderness readily accessible to the rapidly-developing Grande Prairie district.

Your support in this issue is vital. We need action NOW to protect this region while there's still something to protect.

We suggest a meeting with your cabinet during its visit to Grande Prairie would allow full and open discussion on both the proposals we have enclosed.

Thank you for your consideration.

W. R. Neufeld

W. Robert Neufeld; President.

cc: Dr. Allan Warrack
Dr. Winston Backus
Hon. William Yurko
Hon. Allan Adair
Opposition Leader Harry Strom
Spirit River MLA Grant Notley

WILD KAKWA

P. O. Box 212

Grande Prairie, Alberta

TO:

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM YURKO

MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

A PROPOSAL TO PROTECT THE KAKWA FALLS REGION OF WEST/CENTRAL ALBERTA THROUGH DESIGNATION AS A "RESTRICTED DEVELOPMENT AREA" PURSUANT TO SECTION 15: THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ACT.

MARCH, 1972

SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

"WILD KAKWA"

cc: Dr. Allan Warrack;
Minister of Lands and Forests.

Dr. Winston Backus;
Minister of Public Works.

Hon. Robert Bowling;
Minister in charge of Tourism.

Dr. Walter Trost, Chairman;
Environment Conservation Authority.

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THE AREA...

The area of concern is the most northerly portion of the Rocky Mountain chain within Alberta. It is the only relatively-unspoiled mountainous region readily accessible to residents of the fast-growing Peace River country. Although rich in mineral and timber resources, the region's greater significance involves environmental values and a potential for recreational development. This submission is concerned with a total area of about 20 townships, as outlined on the map on Page 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE...

The region contains significant headwaters to the Peace River. The Torrens and Narraway rivers are important tributaries of the Wapiti and their protection is vital to a supply of pure water for the city of Grande Prairie. The Kakwa River has much significance as a major tributary of the Smoky River, and thence the Peace.

The region contains habitat for bighorn sheep, caribou, mountain goats, and endangered species such as the grizzly bear and wolf. The streams contain trout, Arctic grayling, Dolly Varden char and mountain whitefish, all requiring pure, clear water for survival.

SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

The scenic values of this region rival those of the mountain national parks. Several waterfalls, chief among them being the upper falls on the Kakwa, are within a few minutes' walk of the road. Fishing is excellent in the myriad streams and rivers and hunting is fair. Existing roads provide good access to areas for hiking, mountain climbing and nature study groups.

At the Porcupine crossing of the Kakwa, in the region's eastern portion, are Indian gravesites deserving of protection. One proposed route of the new highway between Grande Prairie and Grande Cache would touch upon the eastern boundary of the proposed area for restricted development.

GENERAL CONCERNS...

Resource development, particularly involving coal exploration, already has created severe and no doubt irreparable damage to the region's environmental values. Mountain tops are being disfigured by trenches, overburden is being dumped into ravines and systems of crude roads and creek crossings are rampant. Last summer, various citizens of this province were turned back from using a public road because an oil well was being drilled in the middle of it. There appears to be no development co-ordination and less consideration for environmental or recreational values.

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SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS...

1. The area described upon the accompanying map should be designated a "Restricted Development Area" as per Section 15, The Department of the Environment Act.

2. All new development, including further exploration for minerals or petroleum, should be curtailed until completion and assessment of the Foothills Land Use Allocation Study.

3. Any and all proposals for development subsequent to the assessment of that study should be referred to the Environment Conservation Authority for study, with a specific view to:

   a. Ensuring proper environmental protection and due consideration of the recreational aspects involved.

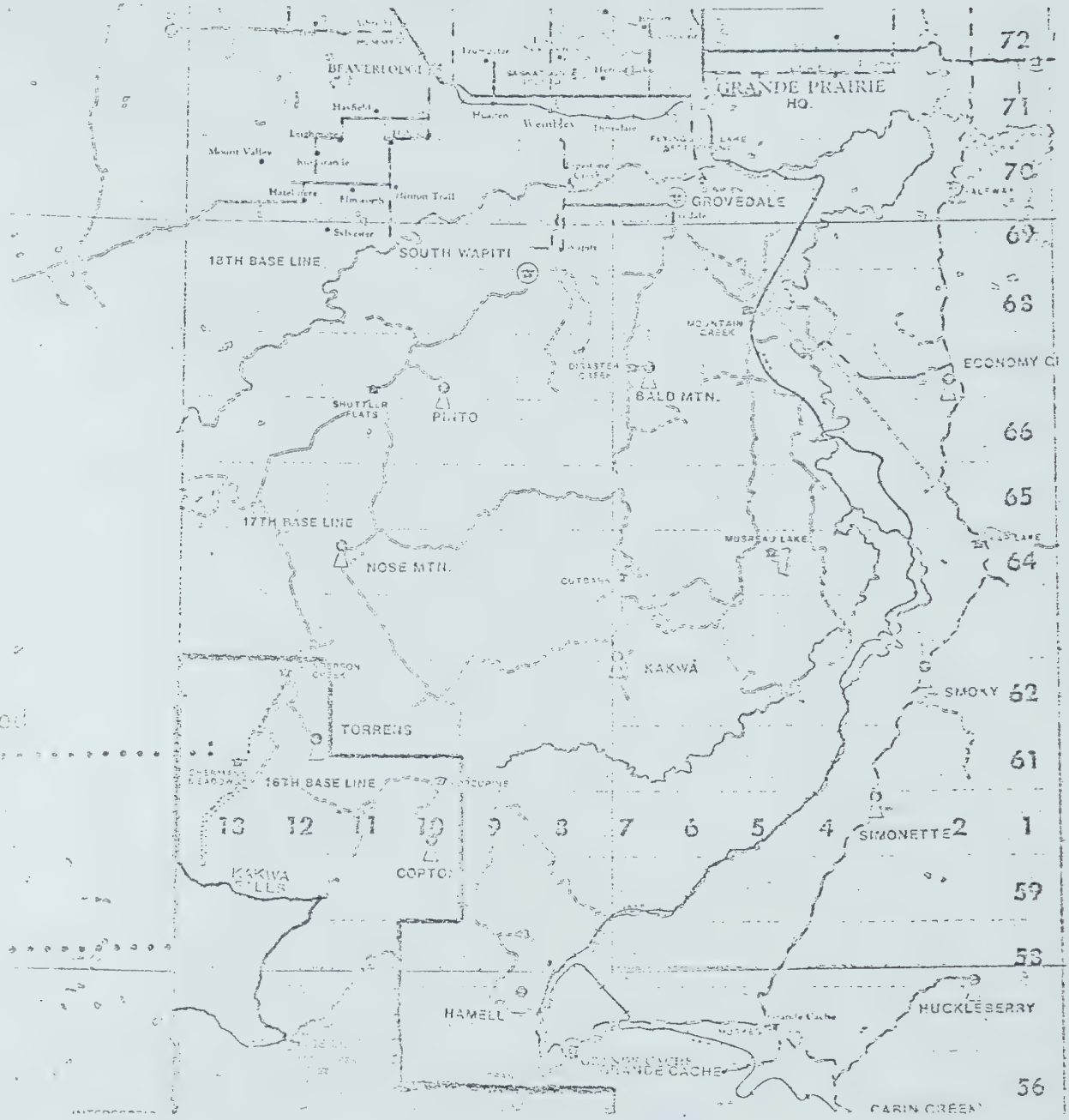
   b. Ensuring the necessary public participation in decisions concerning the region -- as demanded by the thousands of persons whose support for this proposal is in evidence.

4. It is our understanding local forestry officials have recommended a provincial park in the Dinosaur Ridge area. Pursuant to acceptance by the resource allocation study, we are in general support of this proposal.

WILD KAKWA

P. O. Box 212

Grande Prairie, Alberta



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WILD KAKWA
P. O. Box 212
Grande Prairie, Alberta

TO: THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WILDERNESS AREAS.

MR. T.A. DRINKWATER: CHAIRMAN

A PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WILDERNESS AREA IN THE KAKWA FALLS REGION OF WEST/CENTRAL ALBERTA

MARCH, 1972

SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATION SOCIETY
"WILD KAKWA"

cc: Dr. Allan Warrack;
Minister of Lands and Forests.

Mr. William Yurko;
Minister of the Environment.

Mr. [illegible];
Minister of Public Works.

Dr. [illegible];
[illegible] Conservation Authority.

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Dedicated to Society, Wilderness in the Peace

[illegible]...

Involved in this proposal is the area of approximately [illegible] square miles as indicated upon the attached map. It is bounded on the south by the Willmore Wilderness Park; on the west by the Alberta-British Columbia border; on the north by [illegible] River and on the east by the South Nakwa River headwaters.

It contains three major mountain peaks: Nakwa Mt., [illegible] Mt. and Mount May. The majority of the region is above the 5,000 foot level and is extremely rugged in terrain.

ACCESS...

Vehicular access to this scenic region is virtually [illegible], since the removal of a temporary bridge upstream from the Nakwa Falls. Exploration for mineral resources has been [illegible] by the terrain and the region is relatively unscarred by roads or seismic lines.

An extension of the Two Lakes forestry road terminates at the Nakwa River upstream from the upper falls. Old pack trails parallel the Nakwa and South Nakwa rivers outside the boundaries of the proposed wilderness area.

It is our submission that this lack of vehicular access would be greatly beneficial to enforcement of the act's requirements for protection from motor vehicle violations.

On the other hand, the existing road makes it possible for visitors to find a night in the edge of a wilderness area without [illegible] the wilderness [illegible] [illegible].

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS...

The Kakwa rivers and their headwaters within the proposed wilderness area are significant sources of fresh, pure water for the Smoky River and ultimately the Peace River.

The region provides habitat for a variety of wildlife, including such endangered species as the grizzly bear, mountain caribou and bighorn sheep.

The ruggedness of the terrain would make any development of petroleum or coal resources difficult, if not impossible, without severe environmental damage in the form of watershed destruction, erosion problems and wildlife disturbance.

RECOMMENDATIONS...

We therefore recommend that the advisory committee give immediate consideration to this proposal and recommend the establishment of THE KAKWA WILDERNESS AREA to the minister of the environment prior to the finish of the current sitting of the Alberta Legislature.

It should be noted this proposal is fully supported by more than 10,000 Alberta residents, either by petition or through the auspices of their elected representatives.

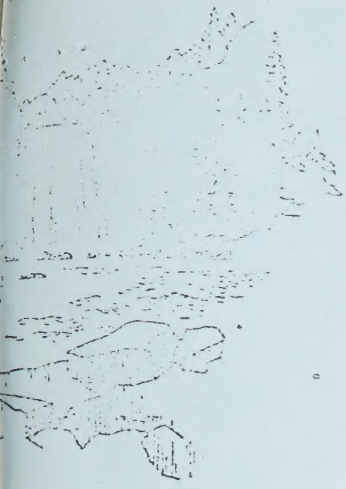
Thank you...

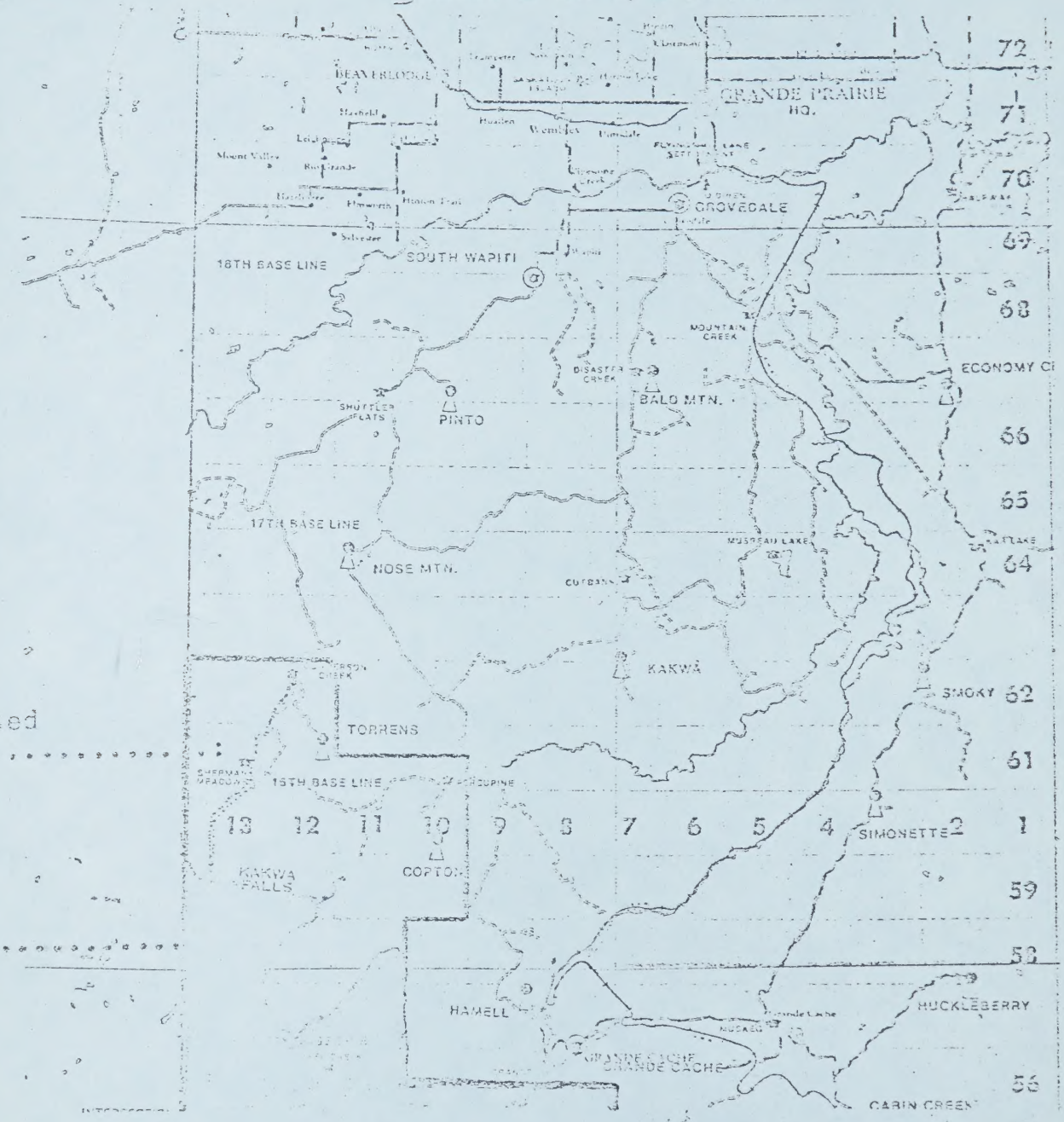
W. Robert Neufeld, president.

WILD KAKWA

P. O. Box 212

Grande Prairie, Alberta





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